

## Wildlife Practicum—Herbivore Specialist Stream

Practicums are a unique and rewarding opportunity to help local wildlife, increase your awareness of local wildlife species and their natural history, and learn more about urban wildlife issues and welfare, while under the mentorship of professional wildlife rehabilitators. Wild ARC practicum participants volunteer full-time under the supervision of staff to perform animal husbandry duties, medical treatments, and diet preparation and hand-feeding a variety of young wildlife. Participants will also have the opportunity to participate in workshops, access Wild ARC's library of rehabilitation resources, and ask seasoned wildlife rehabilitation staff any questions they may have.

Wild ARC's Herbivore Specialist practicum stream provides the opportunity for participants to specialize in sensitive herbivores like Black-tailed Deer fawns and Eastern Cottontail Rabbits. Participants will gain extensive knowledge and hands-on experience in raising these species, and will build skills in assessment, treatment, medical diagnostics, husbandry, and release evaluation for these sensitive herbivores. Participants will be closely involved in patient examinations, rearing, medication dosage calculation and administration, and ensuring nutritional and enrichment needs are met. This stream is also of particular interest for candidates interested in biosecurity and disease management in animals.

All participants will acquire skills in species identification, enriching enclosure setup and proper husbandry techniques, safe animal handling, record-keeping, and data analysis.

### Skills and experience:

- Comfortable and patient around a variety of birds, mammals, reptiles and amphibians
- Excellent communication, teamwork and observation skills
- Strong work ethic and ability to prioritize and work independently
- Previous wildlife rehabilitation or animal care experience is preferred
- Identification skills of BC plant species is preferred

### Responsibilities:

- Specialize in the daily care and treatment of sensitive herbivorous wild species
- Clean and sanitize animal enclosures of greenery, enrichment items, food and feces
- Set up enriching indoor and outdoor habitats for wild patients
- Ensuring nutritional and enrichment needs of patients are met
- Prepare species appropriate diets and administer feedings to adult and juvenile wild patients
- Administration of medications and treatments for recovering wild herbivore patients
- Monitoring health and condition of animals under the guidance of wildlife rehabilitators
- Maintaining complete and accurate records for patient care files

### **Practicum Program Duration and Time Commitment**

This practicum involves a full-time voluntary placement that can span two, three, or four months, and is available from April to October (off-season opportunities are occasionally available). It is strongly recommended that participants not take on extra employment during the full-time practicum placement.

All positions are voluntary; no stipend or salary is offered. Housing and transportation are not provided. Please note that Wild ARC is not located on a frequent public transit route, and thus reliable transportation is necessary. Insurance is the responsibility of the participant.

### **Working Conditions\*:**

- Work outside in a variety of weather conditions.
- Walk on uneven ground (mulch, gravel, grass, concrete), and up/down low grade hills
- Be on feet for long periods of time and bend/kneel/squat.
- Occasionally lift 40 pounds
- Use of fine motor skills (dexterity) for small patient feeding
- Use of Personal Protective Equipment to limit exposure to zoonotic diseases
- Use of BC SPCA truck to gather grazing materials for patients
- Considerable time and energy spent moving grazing/greenery materials down to patients.

\*BC SPCA is an inclusive organization and will make reasonable accommodations to working conditions upon request. Please contact us if you have any concerns or questions.

### **Practicum Program Requirements:**

- ✓ Minimum age of 19 years
- ✓ Tetanus vaccine within last 10 years (need to be willing to be vaccinated for zoonotic diseases applicable to the work site. Only Tetanus vaccine is needed for this position.)
- ✓ Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- ✓ Ability to work independently and as a team member
- ✓ Strong observation and record-keeping skills
- ✓ Academic background in biological or environmental sciences, veterinary medicine or animal welfare studies preferred
- ✓ Volunteer experience in wildlife rehabilitation, wildlife management or animal care is beneficial but not required

### **Practicum Educational Credit:**

Wild ARC's practicum program is intended as an educational or professional development opportunity. For example, the University of British Columbia offers a 6-credit practicum course credit (APBI 496) for the program, which can be a transferable 4<sup>th</sup> year credit at other institutions.

This placement can also be completed to fulfill the practicum requirement for Royal Roads University's Environmental Practice stream. For those not in university, the practicum can be used as credit towards a certificate course in wildlife rehabilitation training by a professional association. (*Note: acceptance into the practicum is required before registering for either.*)

**Please send completed applications to the Assistant Manager at [acurrie@spca.bc.ca](mailto:acurrie@spca.bc.ca).**

Application Packages can be submitted from February 1 to 22 and must include:

- ✓ Completed Practicum Application Form (PDF)
- ✓ Current Curriculum Vitae and Cover Letter detailing career aspirations
- ✓ Two references (at least one former employer)
- ✓ Valid Driver's Abstract (needed for operation of BC SPCA vehicles)

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: February 22 of each year**